

Teacher's Guide

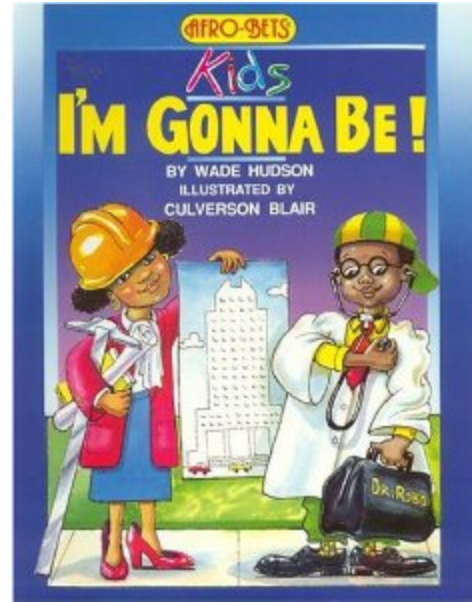
## **I'm Gonna Be**

Written by Wade Hudson

Illustrated by Culverson Blair

Published by Just Us Books

Target ages: 3-7



### **Book Description**

The AFRO-BETS Kids ponder what they might want to be when they grow up, taking inspiration from African-Americans who have achieved in the various occupations highlighted. “When I grow up,” says Robo, “I’m going to be an inventor like Elijah McCoy. I’ll invent machines that will make work easier for everyone.”

### **Themes**

education, working hard to achieve goals, dedication, Black heroes, role models

### **Pre-Reading Discussion**

- Look at the cover. What do you think the book is about?
- What do you think the kids on the cover want to be when they grow up? How can you tell?
- What do you want to be when you grow up?

### **Discussion Questions**

- What does Robo want to be? What do Glo, Stef, Nandi, Langston and Tura want to be?
- Who is Spike Lee? Why is he famous?
- Who is Reginald Lewis? Why is his career important?
- Nandi considers becoming a newscaster like Norma Quarles. What other Black newscasters can you name?
- Look at the last page of the book. Do you know what each AFRO-BETS Kid wants to be? How can you tell? Give examples.
- What does a professor do?
- What do the AFRO-BETS Kids’ role models have in common? What do you think they had to do to achieve their goals?
- What does Nandi say they all have to do no matter what their become when they grow up?
- What does Robo remind everyone? Why is Robo’s reminder important?

### **Define these words/phrases**

Athlete

Confident

Doctor  
Discover  
Astronaut  
Chemist  
Inventor  
Choreographer  
Community  
Disagreement  
Publisher  
Psychiatrist  
Universe  
Architect  
Engineer

### **WRITING/LANGUAGE ARTS**

- A. To achieve in a career, what characteristics does a person need. Have students write a list of adjectives.
- B. Ask students to write down what jobs they have, giving each job a title, and writing the responsibility next to the title. Ex. Babysitter—watch my little brother after school; tutor—help my friend with her homework. Then ask students to write about how the job they have now might prepare them for a career later. If you're good with children, what jobs could you have when you're older?
- C. The AFRO-BETS Kids model themselves after different Black achievers. Ask students to write a poem about a person they admire and why.
- D. Ask students to imagine they're an inventor like Elijah McCoy. What would they invent to make life easier? Write about that invention and why it's important.
- E. At the end of the book Robo reminds all his friend to never give up. Have students write their own words of advice to friends who want to achieve. Post their words of wisdom on the bulletin board as reminders for the class.

### **ART**

- A. Divide the class into groups and assign each group an occupation that's highlighted in the book. Each group should then find as many African American achievers in that occupation as possible, and create an artist project (collage, illustration, etc.) that highlights the achievers and their field.
- B. Have students illustrate the invention they brainstorm in Activity D of the Writing/Language Arts section (above).
- C. Using popsicle sticks like Glo did in the book, have students build a model for a bridge, house or other building.
- D. With a disposable camera, invite each student to take one photo of something he or she feels is interesting or special. Have the photos developed, as students to mount them on construction paper and give their photo a title.

### **MUSIC**

Do Internet research or refer to *Great Women in the Struggle*, for examples of women who've excelled in music and other areas of performing arts. (ex. Mary Lou Williams, Marian Anderson) Play some of their music for the students.

### **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

- A. Using information in the Note to Readers in the back of the book, have students match the name of the role model/achiever to their occupation.
- B. Host a career day to introduce students to other occupations
- C. Write the name of each occupation mentioned in the book on separate sheets of paper. (Make sure there is one slip of paper for each student in the class—so there may be duplicates.) Have each student pick a slip of paper from a bowl or bag, then do research to find out the kind of education and preparation that is necessary to achieve that career goal. Student will then do an oral presentation based on their research.
- D. Host a talent show for students to showcase and hone their talents.
- E. Encourage students' entrepreneurship. Charge them with developing an idea for a business. Have them come up with a name and purpose for the business. They can also select classmates they would hire for positions within the organization. Who would they pick to work for them and why?

### **About the Author**

**Wade Hudson** has written nearly 20 books for children including *Pass It On: African American Poetry for Children*; *Jamal's Busy Day* and *Powerful Words*. A Stephen Crane Literary Award recipient and 2003 inductee into the International Literary Hall of Fame for Writers of African Descent, Mr. Hudson serves on the advisory boards of many organizations, including the Langston Hughes Library at the Alex Haley Farm, operated by the Children's Defense Fund.

### **About the Illustrator**

**Culverson Blair** is a graphic designer and illustrator. He has done illustrations and design work for Macmillan, *Scholastic* magazine, Houghton Mifflin, New Jersey Books and *Ms. Magazine*. Originally from Austin, TX, Culverson now resides in Dallas, TX.

**Additional classroom resources are available at the Teacher/Librarian Center of [www.justusbooks.com](http://www.justusbooks.com).**

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